



NEWS RELEASE

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SCOTT PETERS

First District

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For Immediate Release

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Canyon Watchers Help City Reduce Sewage Spills by 80% in 8 Years

SAN DIEGO -- In recognition of Earth Day, Council President Peters and representatives from the San Diego Oceans Foundation, I Love a Clean San Diego, the Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon and the City's Metropolitan Wastewater Department gathered today to thank the community volunteers who help prevent sewer spills from fouling our watershed and coastal waters.

"As we prepare to celebrate Earth Day, I want to take this opportunity to thank these volunteers for the hundreds of hours of invaluable service in the cause of protecting our canyon environment," Peters said.

Since 2000, the City of San Diego reduced sewer spills and beach closure days by 80%, thanks to an investment in monitoring and infrastructure, and community partnerships such as the Volunteer Canyon Watchers Program, which uses hikers, runners and bicyclists as the City's "eyes and ears" in our 10 local canyons. Last year, volunteers donated more than 700 hours to the Canyon Watchers program.

Peters credited the City and community volunteers with a dramatic reduction in water pollution. "As a result of all of these efforts, by 2007, we had reduced sewer spills and beach closure days by 80%, and our beaches now consistently earn "A" grades for water quality in the annual survey from Heal the Bay," Peters said.

To report a broken manhole cover or sewer spill, call the City of San Diego Sewer Spill Hotline at (619) 515-3525. To get involved with the Canyon Watchers Program, call Metro Wastewater's Public Information Line at (858) 292-6484.

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